

HUMANISTIC AND THEANTHROPIC EDUCATION

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The existence of education reveals the fact that man is an imperfect and incomplete being, as has been witnessed and continues to be witnessed from the experience of the human race. All philosophies, all religions, the sciences, and a myriad of civilizations testify to this fact. Man is a being who must be perfected and completed. Therefore, the main purpose of education is to perfect and to complete man. Immediately, however, the following inevitable question arises: With what must man be perfected and with what must he be made complete?

Observed from every side, man is, according to his essence, "open" towards other beings and to other worlds. He is in no way the closed monad of Leibnitz. With all his being, both his natural and psychic self, man weaves together, consciously or subconsciously, willingly or instinctively, the enormous and incomprehensible net of life encompassing the whole world. Education, if it wants to be truly human, must begin from observable facts as well as from fundamental logical principles. The existence in human history of the search for what is perfect and complete gives birth in our conscience to the passionate question: Who is a perfect and complete human being?

Perhaps Plato? But he, precisely due to his deep knowledge of his own imperfections and shortcomings, was transformed into an arrow of thirst for the worlds above, the worlds of the eternal ideas and ideals. This means that he is not a perfect and complete man.

Perhaps Buddha is perfect? But Buddha being persecuted by monstrous and pitiless feelings of human imperfection, transferred all of his desires for the perfection of the human being to the world beyond-to a world of apathy and insensibility, that is, to Nirvana. Therefore, neither is he the perfect and complete man.

Perhaps Moses? Yet even Moses, persecuted by the horrible calamities of his people and of his own personal weakness, continued to seek help from heaven. Indeed, the bitterness of his humanity is sweetened with prophetic visions about the future coming of the Messiah and the Savior. This means that he also is not a perfect and complete man.

Perhaps Mohammed? But Mohammed, being tortured by his bloodthirsty Hades and by his sensual paradise, runs along this planet realizing through fire and iron his prophetic dreams, trampling with fanatic enthusiasm on the corpses of the "infidels." Therefore, neither is he the perfect and complete man.

Perhaps Kant? But Kant, also tortured with the imperfection and the incompleteness of the human being, transferred whatever is human from the narrow confines of rationalistic decision-making and placed it in the abyss of the meta-rationalistic "Das Ding an Sich [the Thing-in-Itself],' leaving himself at the mercy of the unforeseen, of the unknown, and of the dreadful. Therefore, neither is he a perfect and complete man.

Perhaps Shakespeare? He, however, in his insatiable thirst for the perfect and complete, lived a most imperfect and incomplete life of unbearable tragedy. He guided man to the worlds above yet left him along the road amazed and astonished. Consequently, neither is he a perfect and complete man.

Perhaps Goethe? Living, however, the drama of the human being in all the breadth and depth in which Mephistopheles plays the primary role, Goethe, by his pre-death cry "Licht, mehr Licht [Light, more light]," clearly showed how unfortunate his departure from this world to the world beyond. Therefore, neither was that one a perfect and complete man.

Perhaps Tolstoy? Yet in his continuous and unyielding struggle with imperfection and incompleteness, he reached such a spiritual restlessness that a short while before his death, in an unbearable agony of the soul, he escaped from his house with the purpose of escaping from himself, from sorrowful imperfection and his tragically incomplete being. Therefore, neither is he a perfect and complete man.

Perhaps Nietzsche? But, through the volcanic feeling of tragic imperfection and of the unbearable incompleteness of the human being in all the dimensions and realities of this world, as well as through his unbridled longing for the higher and more perfect man, Nietzsche became insane! Therefore, neither is Nietzsche a perfect and complete man.

And so on, from the first to the last man: one sorrowful parade of imperfect and incomplete men. Yet in the middle of them stands That One who had the fullness of mystery, the wondrous God-man: in a divine way perfect and humanly real. His human goodness is divinely perfect and complete; His human love is divinely perfect and complete; so is His righteousness, and His mercy, and His compassion, and His immortality, and His eternity and His beauty: all are humanly real but also divinely perfect and complete. Nothing is miraculous because He has transformed all things human to divine; He has completed and perfected everything by the divine. In a word, the whole man in Him is divinely perfected and divinely completed.

Do you not believe this? Try to imagine a more perfect God than Christ or a more perfect man than Him. You will not be able to do this because neither the individual nor the collective mind of man can imagine a more perfect God than Christ nor a more perfect man than Him. More importantly, all the divine perfection is humanly real and concrete in Christ. There is not one perfect good or one perfect truth or one perfect beauty that is not incarnated in His Person or realized in His life. On account of all of these, He is precisely the perfect and complete man, the one whom the human race, the human mind, and the human heart have been seeking through a myriad of religions and philosophies, through the sciences, the Arts, and civilization. If we apply this conclusion to education, we would say that Christ is the ideal man whom human education

seeks as its goal, meaning, and ideal. With Him and from Him, we know what constitutes the true man. In Him, we have the type from which each man can build for himself an ideally good, just, perfect, and complete man. This is possible without great and insuperable difficulties because, in every labour, He gives His divine powers in order that one may obtain all His goodness.

You feel that we are already on the main path of the God-human philosophy of education. Pay attention to the internal structure of this education with seriousness and objectivity. The plan, the materials, the program, the soul, and the spirit are all according to the Gospel—they are all God-human. The values are divine, and the methods are centred on the Gospel. God always occupies the first place, man the second. Man lives and thinks, feels, and works for God. This means that man is illuminated by God. Here specifically, the question is not about some abstract, super-heavenly God of Plato or Kant, but about a God of concrete earthly reality, humanly concrete of a God who became man and infuses into human categories all that is divine, immortal, and eternal. Therefore, only this one among the human race, namely, the God-man Christ, had the right to seek from men divine perfection ("You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matth. 5:48) and to place divine perfection as the goal of life and as the goal of the whole endeavour of man. By doing this, He gives men all the necessary means and all the necessary strength to realize this goal of obtaining divine perfection.

What are these means? The holy gospel-oriented virtues: faith and love, fasting and prayer, meekness and humility, compassion and goodness, hope and patience, truth and justice. Applying these virtues produces a holy man, namely, a perfect and complete man. Such a man knows the real meaning of the world and of life, and he lives with his whole being directed toward realizing his given purpose in the arena of human activity. Formed by the holy virtues, such a man draws unceasingly from the aorta of his existence all the immortal powers of the everlasting God-man. Thus, already in this life, he feels immortal and eternal; for this reason, he sees in every man an immortal and eternal being. The evangelical virtues are the conduits of divine light; each one instills in man a beam of light. As a result of this, the saint radiates, illuminates, and enlightens. He carries in himself "The light of the world"; this light illuminates the whole world so that he also might see its eternal meaning and eternal value. The light of the world is simultaneously "the light of life." It illuminates the road that leads to immortality and eternal life. In our human world, light and life are synonymous, as are darkness and death.

The saints of the Orthodox Catholic Church of God are proof of what has been said above. Education and training are nothing other than the extension of holiness, the radiance of holiness. The saint sends forth light, and on account of this, he enlightens and educates. Education presupposes with all its being holiness. True education is, in fact, the saint. Without the saints there are no true teachers and educators. Nor is there true education without holiness. Without illumination, there is no enlightenment. Holiness is holiness through divine light. True education

and enlightenment are nothing other than the radiance of holiness; only the saints are truly illuminated. Holiness lives and breathes by light, simultaneously shining and teaching. There is, therefore, an identity common to holiness and illumination.

Truly, then, education signifies illumination-illumination through sanctification in the Holy Spirit who is the vehicle and the creator of holiness and of the light of knowledge. The saints, because they are sanctified and illuminated by the Holy Spirit, are also true teachers and educators.

Education without holiness, namely education without sanctification by the Holy Spirit and without the perfection and the completion of man through the God-man, that is, atheistic education, influenced Europe in its humanistic idolatry. It is immaterial whether or not this idolatry is manifested in the divinization of the Pope or in the divinization of culture, of science, of civilization, of the arts, of politics, of fashion. Everywhere, the main objective is to organize man, society, and the world without God, without Christ. This is also true of education. There, the main objective is to illuminate man and humanity without Christ, God. Towards this direction, humanistic education occupies itself with the creation of the new man. The plan for this new man is simple: Christ or anything of Christ cannot exist in the new man. Europe applied itself to the task and began to create the new man without God, a society without God, and humanity without God.

The Renaissance had filled many hearts with hope. This was natural since European man had essentially withered on account of the Vatican. Through its illusory scholastic philosophy and its cannibal Jesuitism in ethics, the Vatican had drained the creative, vital powers of European man. Therefore, the renewal of European man with the humanist spirit of ancient Greece was seen as essential in order to prevent his impending death. For this to be realized, it was necessary for European man to be carried away from Christ and to sever his every bond with the invisible world.

Rousseau took many things from nature and introduced them to man. The following question quickly arises: What constitutes the nature of man? The senses, answers the empirical philosophy of Locke and Hume. The entire nature of man is derived from the senses and is summarized in the senses. When that which is not essential for man is subtracted from him, only the senses remain to define who he is.

The man who is essentially defined by the senses is very primitive and boorish. For this reason, rationalistic philosophy under the leadership of Descartes and Kant proposes a new type of man: man as intellect. Man is, above all, a rational being. Everything else in him is unimportant to the extent that reason is able to claim primacy in his being.

Yet, the volitionists, led by Schopenhauer and Styemer, protest that the most important element in man has been omitted. Man's essence cannot be summed up in the senses or in his reason since he is neither one of these. Rather, he is foremost comprised of volition. Indeed, they say that man, as volition, is the true man; he is the new man.

Afterwards, Europe was directed towards the search for the new man among inferior creatures in order to, based on the animal kingdom, create man without God. There was great joy, and hysterical shouts were heard when the hypothesis that man originated from the ape and other mammals was put forward. Nietzsche, with his storms and earthquakes, rushed into the world of the slothful and destructive thought of Europe. With the passion of a prophet and the ardour of a poet, he announced his gospel about man to the world. More ardent in his thoughts than in his senses, he extrapolated from the volitionism of Darwin the bold but logical conclusion: If the ape is the transitional link to man, why cannot man be the transitional link to the superhuman? Indeed, man is a being who stands between victory and transgression. "What is the ape to man? He is an object of laughter and disgraceful shame. The same must be true for what man is to the superhuman: laughter and disgraceful shame." The superhuman is the reasoning of the earth and the purpose of history.

What then comprises the superhuman? He is composed of four elements and principles. First of all, is his need to kill God. "Oh, you superhuman," says Zarathustra, addressing his disciples. "God was the greatest danger for you." But do not be afraid. "God died," Zarathustra proclaims, and there is no danger for you anymore; there are no more obstacles for the superhuman. The second element and principle is that one is not to have pity on one's neighbour; whatever happens, we must assist it. Thirdly, and most importantly, is the irresponsible and merciless desire for power. Finally, everything is permitted. For the superhuman, there is neither good nor evil; he lives beyond good and evil, beyond truth and error, beyond conscience and responsibility.

Here ends the drama of humanism: It has created the new man, the superhuman! From the embryo of Rousseau, the humanistic man developed into the superhuman. But what is the essence of the superhuman? From what material is he created? From an instinct only, from the instinct of self-preservation. If, however, it is not possible for even the smallest insect to be formed from one and only one instinct, how is it possible to have the most complex being on earth formed, that is, man? Here, in the whole animal kingdom, where there are more than six hundred thousand species, there is not one mosquito or pre-mosquito, which consists of one and only one instinct, even if this is the instinct of self-preservation. In spite of this, Nietzsche proclaimed one single instinct for the superhuman. For this, his superhuman is, in reality, a subhuman, that is, a non-human. If you prefer, the superhuman is the most genius caricature of man found on this darkened planet.

Whatever is valid for the superhuman is also valid for all his humanistic ancestors and descendants. Thus, the natural man of Rousseau is nothing else than a semihuman because everything that is supernatural has been taken away from him. This semi-human is identical to the sub-human since, in him, all the abnormal evils that were nourished and flattered by humanistic education and training have grown unhindered.

As for Locke, man is constituted by his senses. One part of man has been proclaimed to be the whole man. Here again, we have a sub-human and a new human monster. What are the senses without the soul but a five-string violin without the violinist?

Who is the man of reason for Kant? Once again, a fragment from man is proclaimed as the total man. Where is the world, the infinite world of the human senses and feelings, where one finds both our paradise and hell? Is it possible for a man to be a man without them? No, absolutely not. Therefore, the Kantian man is simply a caricature of man.

What similarity does the man of volition who belongs to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche have with man? Where is the soul with its boundlessness, conscience, and compassion? Without all these, can man be man? Oh, this, too, is a caricature of man, a new caricature!

Observe, therefore, the humanistic exhibition of the new man: semi-human next to the semi-human, sub-human next to the sub-human, non-human next to the non-human—that is, a caricature next to another caricature, insignificant men next to insignificant men. Do you not see that European humanistic education has created only shoddy men and, with them, has populated the whole of Europe? A base little man is the natural man of Rousseau, a shameless man is the man of logic, and a paltry man is also the superhuman. Everywhere, you find an underdeveloped man, fragments and pieces of man. What you do not find anywhere is a whole and complete man! We find ourselves present at a tragic exhibition: The European man is without God; he has degenerated on account of his humanistic education and has become a base and insignificant man!

We are in need of a new Prophet Jeremiah and of a new lamentation: The European man has finished his mission and has created a new man without God and without a soul. But can this new man, this superhuman, be found? Behold, he does not exist as an individual; rather, he exists as a collective power that devastates Europe (and not only Europe) through humanistic education and humanistic culture, as well as through humanistic art and humanistic civilization. Thus, one particular type of European man was created, the Holbachian, namely, *l'homme-machine*, *homo faber*, *homo technicus* (the man-machine, man-maker, technical man). This man is without God and without a soul. In other words, he is a de-divinized and de-spiritualized man-robot. The robot is precisely a robot because it does not recognize God and the soul. Do you know what will be of particular help to him? It will be the so-called psychology without a soul, that is, the European

science concerning the soul, the science about the soul which does not recognize the soul! Is there anything more paradoxical? In fact, this paradox happens to be the most inaccessible palace where her divine majesty lives: the European humanistic psychology (*Psychologie ohne seele*). This is the infallible deity that countless robots venerate today.

Here, then, is what was transforming, and has finally transformed Europe into a laboratory of robots from the Renaissance up to this day. Indeed, the robot is the most wretched type of man. Whoever has eyes to see, let him see: A more miserable, more ugly, and more inhuman man than the European robot does not exist on this planet. May shame and disgrace, eternal shame and eternal disgrace, be upon Europe for its "new man"---a man without God and without a soul, the man-robot.

Since he has killed both God and the soul from within, the European type of man has already gradually been committing suicide for some decades. Suicide is the inevitable outcome of murdering God. Education without God has led Europe and the whole world into a darkness such as humanity has never seen. In this darkness, no one knows anyone, and no one recognizes anyone as his brother!

What other purpose does education have than to enlighten man, to illuminate all the abysses and the precipices in him, and to expel all darkness from him? If, however, man is without Christ, without God, namely, without this unique inextinguishable light, how will he disperse the gloom of the universe which from all sides attacks him, and how will he expel the darkness from within him? With all his lights, but without God, man is nothing other than a firefly in the infinite darkness of the universe. His science and his philosophy, his education and culture, his art and civilization, are but small candles that he lights in the darkness of earthly and worldly events. What can all these candles do in the endless night of the deep darkness of individual social, national, and international problems and events? Perhaps, however, these have already been extinguished, resulting in a thick and deep darkness of impenetrable gloom falling upon Europe and the whole world.

A thoughtless faith in the omnipotence of humanistic SCIENCE and education, of culture and the applied arts, as well as in the omnipotence of humanistic civilization, borders on insanity. Through the tragic influence of this thoughtless faith, European education has also created among us the confrontation between the Church and the School, or rather; it has exceedingly applied its principles in many Orthodox countries having officially expelled God from School. This has been disastrous for our Orthodox people. Our intellectuals who have been cut off from their roots are already carrying from these centuries "the lights" of this humanism in order to "rehabilitate" the Orthodox people. The result has been to transform Orthodox countries into slaughterhouses of souls. On the altars of the new idolatry, the monsters of the apocalypse of European civilization carry out a historically unprecedented slaughter of myriads of human souls

at the hands of the intellectual elite through their humanistic education. A. Zint rightly said that Dachau and other concentration camps are the altars which the intellectuals of Europe erected and at which they religiously officiate over their much talked of humanism.

There is only one way to escape final destruction. What is this way? To accept theanthropic education and apply it completely in all schools, from the greatest to the smallest, and in all state and national educational institutions. Theanthropic education radiates, illuminates, and enlightens with the only inextinguishable and true Light in the entire world, namely, with the God-man Christ. Darkness cannot extinguish or hide this Light, not even the darkness of Europe. Only this is capable of expelling all darkness from man, from society, from the people, and from the state. This, the only true Light, illuminates every man into the nucleus of his being and reveals to each one of us our own immortality, our own divine and eternal brother. It teaches us that only then can the problems of man and the problems of society, the problems of the nation and the problems of humanity be easily understood and solved when they are examined through the God-man Christ.

The main guidelines and characteristics of theanthropic education can be formulated as follows:

1. Man is a being who can be perfected and completed in the most ideal and real way by the God-man and in the God-man.
2. The perfection of man by the God-man takes place with the help of the evangelical witnesses.
3. The illuminated and educated man sees in every man his immortal and eternal brother.
4. Every human work and action—philosophy, science, geography, art, education, culture, manual labour, etc—receives its eternal value when it is sanctified and receives meaning from the God-man.
5. True enlightenment and education are accomplished through a holy life according to the gospel of Christ.
6. The saints are the most perfect illuminators and educators; the more holy a man is, the better an educator and illuminator he becomes.
7. School is the second half of the heart of the Godman; the first is the Church.
8. At the center of all centers and of all ideas and labours stands the God-man Christ and His theanthropic society, the Church.

Source: Father Justin Popovich, tr. Asterios Gerostergios, *Orthodox Faith and Life in Christ*, Institute of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1994, 2005, pp. 51-64.